

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 12, 2003

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

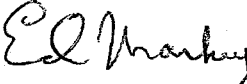
We write in full support of the request you recently received from Governor Mitt Romney for disaster relief in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Commonwealth has requested that you declare an emergency for 12 of the 14 counties (Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288 and in accordance with Title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 206.227. The winter snow storm, which hit the Commonwealth on December 6-7, 2003, has dumped a record snowfall on the City of Boston and nearly all areas of Massachusetts. Along with severe winds, extreme drifts, and coastal flooding, snow removal efforts have been slower, more costly, and very difficult.

Beginning on Saturday, December 6 and continuing through Sunday, December 7, 2003, this record or near-record snowfall has had a detrimental effect on businesses, schools districts, public and private transportation, and government operations. Moreover, the costs of snow removal and prolonged work stoppage will augment current state and local financial hardships.

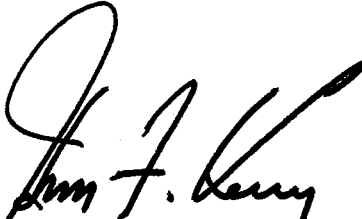
We understand that the Governor has taken action under state law to implement the State Emergency Operations Plan. Beginning on Friday, December 5, a plan was initiated to incorporate all state and local government agencies, relevant private sector partners, and the Massachusetts National Guard to coordinate a response to and recovery from this horrendous blizzard to protect public health and safety. Operation Enduring Freedom in Iraq has severely constrained resources of the National Guard and required further reliance on other state resources such as the Massachusetts Highway Department, Department of Conservation and Recreation, and many private contractors.

We ask that you declare a state of emergency for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; direct the Federal Emergency Management Agency to work with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency to recover from this record-setting blizzard; and allocate the appropriate funds to assist the 12 affected counties in their public health and safety response.


Sincerely,


Edward J. Markey

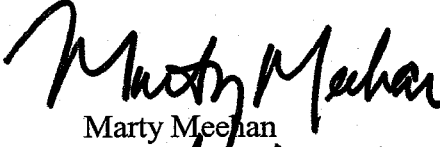

Edward M. Kennedy


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